1: DeLand O-4 (No date)1908 NQ17 Mandan NQ17

231 properly, will enrich them, a scrub lean steer being as valuable in their eyes as a fat, blooded one. These Indians are virtually self-supporting, as they receive very little from the government." (Wheeler, p. 224.)

361 Wheeler here notes the reason why the upper of the two Mandan villages proper near Knife river, which stood on the northeast bank of the Missouri in 1804, was found on the southwest bank in 1833:

Apparently Crossed River. "The five villages mentioned by Lewis and Clarke in 1804, were still in existence in 1833, when Maximilian visited these Indians. One important change had, he states, occurred. The Missouri river had characteristically changed its channel and in Maximilian's day flowed on the eastern side of Rooptahee, or Ruhptare, the second Mandan town of our narrative, so that both the Mandan villages were then on the western south bank."

773 **Mandans and Hidatsas.** "The tradition relating to the origin of the Mandans given by Lewis and Clarke, according to Dr. Matthews, relates, not only to the Mandans, but to the Hidatsa as well. This tradition, I find, is current at the present day and the lake from which the tribe emerged is said to be Minnewakan, or Devil's Lake in North Dakota, the Hidatsa name for this lake—Midihopa—meaning sacred or mysterious water. Dr. Matthews thinks that 'one nation borrowed its legend from the other,' so that both have a common source." (Wheeler, p. 228.)

●771 **Polytheism.** "These people had a belief in a 'Great Spirit,' or
797 'Old Man Immortal,' or 'Great Mystery,' and Dr. Matthews discusses it quite fully in his paper. Their ancient belief appears to have been, on the whole, a species of Polytheism. Religious missionary work on the Fort Berthold reservation began in 1876, and since then there has been a marked change in their religious ideas. The leaven acted but slowly at first, but when its results were apparent it seemed to work with cumulative effect. 'Only a small minority of the people now hold to the wreck of their old paganism.' Carlisle, Santee, and other schools have had their influence in producing this uplift. The younger generations see things with a new and broader vision and their moral and religious notions are cast in a new mold." (Wheeler, p. 229.)

797 Wheeler quotes as follows from Rev. C. L. Hall, the Congrega-

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Fig. 15. As soon as the ice in the rivers breaks up, they run to the banks and throw this interlaced hoop into the water. In the summer time the Mandans and Manitaries often amuse themselves with races in the prairie, for which they have the best opportunity in the vicinity of their villages; twenty young men, or more, often run at once, and on these occasions there is always high betting. Some of them are very swift runners, and can hold out a long time.

The Mandans and Manitaries are extremely superstitious, and all their important actions are guided by such motives. They have most strange ideas of surrounding nature, believe in a multitude of different beings in the heavenly bodies; offer sacrifices to them; invoke their assistance on every occasion; howl, lament, fast, inflict on themselves cruel acts of penance, to propitiate these spirits; and, above all, lay very great stress upon dreams. Some of their traditions have a resemblance to the revelations of the Bible; for instance, Noah's Ark and the Deluge, the history of Samson, &c. The question here arises whether these particulars have not been gradually introduced among them, from their intercourse with Christians, and this seems highly probable. If they have not yet embraced the Christian religion, it would, however, appear that they have adopted some portions which strike them as being either remarkable or interesting.* The belief in a future life, or a better state of things after death, exists among all the American nations; this is confirmed by D'Orbigny (Voyages, tom. iii. p. 90), who justly blames Azara for denying all religious ideas to the people of Paraguay. In order to obtain correct information respecting all their traditions and ideas, we persuaded Dipauch† to enliven our long winter evenings by his narratives, which he readily agreed to do. He spoke with much seriousness and gravity, and I had a most excellent interpreter in Mr. Kipp. I give these narratives, which are often extremely silly, as they were written down from his communications, though I must beg my reader's patience and indulgence. It was not possible to curtail them or to choose only the more interesting parts, since all their traditions and legends have a certain connexion, and really possess some influence on the actual mode of life of this people.

According to Dipauch, these Indians believe in several superior beings, of whom the lord of life, Ohmahank-Numakshi, is the first, the most exalted and the most powerful; who created the earth, man, and every existing object.‡ They believe that he has a tail, and appears sometimes

* This conjecture is adopted by Dr. Edwin James, the learned author of Tanner's Life among the Indians, p. 357 of that work. I refer to this interesting book for the remarkable hieroglyphics of the people of the Algonquin tribe.

† Dipauch is a very distinguished man, and might have been a chief long ago if he had pleased, as he possesses all the necessary qualifications. His father was shot by the Sioux during Lewis and Clarke's winter residence among these Indians. These travellers offered to assist the Mandans against their enemies, and to take the field with them, to which, however, they would not consent.

‡ Beachenridge, p. 71, is very much mistaken in believing that the Mandans and Manitaries worship only buffalo heads, for, if the latter are medicine, it is incontrovertibly true that they believe in a number of superior beings who make a figure in their mythology.

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one of their villages on the other side of Knife River, which frequently occasioned dissension between them, and it is only within these fourteen years that permanent peace and concord have existed between the two people.

At the time when our narrator was a young man, the Arikkaras were near and dangerous enemies to the Mandans. They often fought with them as well as with the Sioux. When one of the two allied nations fought alone, it was almost always defeated, but when they were combined they generally triumphed. The preceding long narrative throws, as I have said, much light on the actual condition of this people, and of their prevalent superstitious customs.

At the time of their first alliance with the Manitaries, the Mandans are said to have inhabited eight or nine villages on the two banks of the Missouri, on the Heart River, and higher upwards. Subsequently a great number of the Mandans were carried off by the small-pox, and their enemies, the Sioux, entirely destroyed their largest village, and massacred the inhabitants. The remaining population then collected in the two villages that still exist—Mih-Tutta-Hang-Kush and Ruhptare. Plate XVI. is a view of Mih-Tutta-Hang-Kush, of which a ground plan will be found at the end of this chapter. Previously to the devastations of the small-pox, the Sioux were not very dangerous enemies to the Mandans, because they lived at too great a distance from them, but the Chayennes and the Arikkaras were their natural adversaries. I shall now proceed to treat of the religious and superstitious practices which still prevail among them.

These Indians are full of prejudice and superstition, and connect all the natural phenomena with the before-mentioned silly creations of their own imaginations. They undertake nothing without first invoking their guardian spirit, or medicine, who mostly appears to them in a dream. When they wish to choose their medicine or guardian spirit, they fast for three or four days, and even longer, retire to a solitary spot, do penance, and even sacrifice joints of their fingers; howl and cry to the lord of life, or to the first man, beseeching him to point out their guardian spirit. They continue in this excited state till they dream, and the first animal or other object which appears to them is chosen for their guardian spirit or medicine. Every man has his guardian spirit. There is, in the prairie, a large hill where they remain motionless many days, lamenting and fasting; not far from this hill is a cave, into which they creep at night. The choice and adoration of their medicine are said to have been taught them by the strange man or spirit who appeared in their villages many years ago, and has not since been seen, and of whom mention has already been made by the name of Ochkih-Hadda. He is said also to have taught them the art of tattooing, and to have instituted their medicine feasts. In all natural phenomena, which are not of daily occurrence, they see wonders, and indications of favourable or unfavourable events. If the falling stars are numerous, or in a certain direction, it is to them an indication of war, or of a great mortality in the human race. They were not willing to have their portraits painted, because they alleged that they should soon die if their portraits came into other hands; at least they endeavoured to obtain the portrait of the painter as an antidote.

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at least they endeavoured to obtain the portrait of the painter as an antidote. One of their chiefs never smoked out of a stone pipe, but always used a wooden one. Mato-Topé never partook of other people's tobacco, but always smoked by himself, with the doors shut. They do not willingly show their medicines or amulets, which are usually kept wrapped up in a bundle or bag, and never opened except on important occasions. They have particular medicine pipes, or, as the English call them, medicine-stems, which are uncovered and used for smoking only on solemn occasions. Many make such pipes according to their own taste; such, for instance, was the pipe of Dipauch (Plate XXI. fig. 3). The bowl was nearly in the form of a Turkish pipe, and was made of brownish-red clay; the tube, which was rather short and thick, represented the lord of life in human form, but which it required some stretch of the imagination to discover. The nation preserves a celebrated pipe of this kind as a sacred relic, which no stranger is permitted to see. It has been in their possession since remote ages, and they offered to show it to me for the value of 100 dollars. The Indians cannot obtain such pipes but at a considerable expense: many of the necessary ornaments are not to be procured among them, such as the upper bill and the red crown of a species of woodpecker (*Picus pilcatus*, Linn.), a bird which is not found so high up the Missouri. For the head of one of these woodpeckers, which was brought from St. Louis, they gave a large handsome buffalo robe, worth six or eight dollars. If a man possesses such a pipe, he sometimes conceives the idea of adopting a medicine son. The young man whom he is to choose appears to him in a dream; it is, however, requisite that he should be of a good family, or have performed some exploit. He acquaints him with his intention, and, after having provided two similar medicine pipes, he asks his newly-adopted son, whether he is ready to undergo the ceremony of the pipes? The latter frequently answers in the affirmative, and the time for the ceremony is fixed: but, if he has not yet made up his mind, it is deferred. The adoptive father then chooses two young men, who practise the medicine dance together, with the two pipes in their hands. The father often dances, in the morning, on the roof of his hut, and instructs these two young men. When the time arrives, and the adopted son is ready for the ceremony, the father, with all his relations, and the two young dancers, repairs to the hut of his newly-chosen son, and brings him a present of maize, cloth, blankets, kettles, and other valuable articles. The father takes his son by the hand and makes him sit down, after which the company dance round him, with the two pipes; they sing, accompanied by the drum and schischikué, the two young dancers keeping time to the music with their pipes. When the ceremony is over, and the presents laid in one or two heaps, the relations of the medicine son bring horses, cloth, blankets, and other things of value, which the two parties reciprocally divide between them. The father then again takes his son by the hand, makes him rise from his seat, and dresses him in new clothes from head to foot, and likewise paints his face according to his fancy. The dress and pipe are henceforth his property, and he is considered as a real son, who must support and defend his father.

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000 cruel scenes, and am almost ready to shrink from the task of reciting them after I have so long promised some account of them. I entered the *medicine-house* of these scenes, as I would have entered a church, and expected to see something extraordinary and strange, but yet in the form of worship or devotion; but alas! little did I expect to see the interior of their holy temple turned into a *slaughter-house*, and its floor strewed with the blood of its fanatic devotees. Little did I think that I was entering a house of God, where His blinded worshippers were to pollute its sacred interior with their blood, and propitiatory suffering and tortures—surpassing, if possible, the cruelty of the rack or the inquisition; but such the scene has been, and as such I will endeavour to describe it.

The "*Mandan religious ceremony*" then, as I believe it is very justly denominated, is an annual transaction, held in their *medicine-lodge* once a year, as a great religious anniversary, and for several distinct objects, as I shall in a few minutes describe; during and after which, they look with implicit reliance for the justification and approval of the Great Spirit.

●771 All of the Indian tribes, as I have before observed, are religious—are worshipful—and many of them go to almost incredible lengths (as will be seen in the present instance, and many others I may recite) in worshipping the Great Spirit; denying and humbling themselves before Him for the same purpose, and in the same hope as we do, perhaps in a more rational and acceptable way.

The tribes, so far as I have visited them, all distinctly believe in the existence of a Great (or Good) Spirit, an Evil (or Bad) Spirit, and also in a future existence and future accountability, according to their virtues and vices in this world. So far the North American Indians would seem to be one family, and such an unbroken theory amongst them; yet with regard to the manner and form, and time and place of that accountability—to the constructions of virtues and vices, and the modes of appeasing and propitiating the Good and Evil Spirits, they are found with all the changes and variety which fortuitous circumstances, and fictions, and fables have wrought upon them.

If from their superstitions and their ignorance, there are oftentimes obscurities and mysteries thrown over and around their system, yet these affect not the theory itself, which is everywhere essentially the same—and which, if it be not correct, has this much to command the admiration of the enlightened world, that they worship with great sincerity, and all according to one creed.

The Mandans believe in the existence of a Great (or Good) Spirit, and also of an Evil Spirit, who they say existed long before the Good Spirit, and is far superior in power. They all believe also in a future state of existence, and a future administration of rewards and punishments, and (so do all other tribes that I have yet visited) they believe those punishments are not eternal, but commensurate with their sins.

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These people living in a climate where they suffer from cold in the severity of their winters, have very naturally reversed our ideas of Heaven and Hell. The latter they describe to be a country very far to the north, of barren and hideous aspect, and covered with eternal snows and ice. The torments of this freezing place they describe as most excruciating; whilst Heaven they suppose to be in a warmer and delightful latitude, where nothing is felt but the keenest enjoyment, and where the country abounds in buffaloes and other luxuries of life. The Great or Good Spirit they believe dwells in the former place for the purpose of there meeting those who have offended him; increasing the agony of their sufferings, by being himself present, administering the penalties. The Bad or Evil Spirit they at the same time suppose to reside in Paradise, still tempting the happy; and those who have gone to the regions of punishment they believe to be tortured for a time proportioned to the amount of their transgressions, and that they are then to be transferred to the land of the happy, where they are again liable to the temptations of the Evil Spirit, and answerable again at a future period for their new offences.

Such is the religious creed of the Mandans, and for the purpose of appeasing the Good and Evil Spirits, and to secure their entrance into those "fields Elysian," or beautiful hunting grounds, do the young men subject themselves to the horrid and sickening cruelties to be described in the following pages.

There are other three distinct objects (yet to be named) for which these religious ceremonies are held, which are as follow:—

First, they are held annually as a celebration of the event of the subsiding of the Flood, which they call *Mee-nee-ro-ka-ha-sha*, (sinking down or settling of the waters.)

Secondly, for the purpose of dancing what they call, *Bel-lohck-na-pic* (the bull-dance); to the strict observance of which they attribute the coming of buffaloes to supply them with food during the season; and

Thirdly and lastly, for the purpose of conducting all the young men of the tribe, as they annually arrive to the age of manhood, through an ordeal of privation and torture, which, while it is supposed to harden their muscles and prepare them for extreme endurance, enables the chiefs who are spectators to the scene, to decide upon their comparative bodily strength and ability to endure the extreme privations and sufferings that often fall to the lots of Indian warriors; and that they may decide who is the most hardy and best able to lead a war-party in case of extreme exigency.

This part of the ceremony, as I have just witnessed it, is truly shocking to behold, and will almost stagger the belief of the world when they read o it. The scene is too terrible and too revolting to be seen or to be told, were it not an essential part of a whole, which will be new to the civilized world, and therefore worth their knowing.

The bull-dance, and many other parts of these ceremonies are exceed-

repair to the cornfields and are soon followed by the young men, who enjoy their company and take every liberty. The young men then return, and, if no hunting party offers, pass the day on the tops of the huts, sleeping in the sun, or strolling from hut to hut, eating corn and smoking Missourie tobacco. At other times they amuse themselves by running races either on foot or horseback, and performing warlike manoeuvres; they have also a favorite game which occupies much of their time.

[328] . . . this is the first work performed by the women in the morning after having paid their devoirs to their lovers and washed themselves in the Missourie. . . . every family being provided with a brass or copper kettle for the purpose of cooking flesh. Whether this proceeds from superstition or not I cannot pretend to say, but they assured me that any kind of flesh cooked in those earthen pots would cause them to split. One or more of the largest kind is constantly boiling prepared corn and beans, and all who come in are welcome to help themselves to as much as they can eat of the contents.

. . . . . Early this morning our young hostler took our horses to feed in the meadow but never allowed them to be for a moment out of his sight, lest the Assiniboines or other enemies might steal them. We purchased sweet corn, beans, meal, and various other trifles, for which we paid in ammunition, beads, and tobacco.

[329] It would have been in vain for us to attempt to prevail upon anyone in this village to ferry us over; for, as long as a stranger has any property, they wish him to trade all he brings in the first village he enters, every village being ambitious of getting as many European articles as they can, [330] particularly arms and ammunition. This is good policy; for, notwithstanding they are so near each other, and live in amity, they are not free from jealousy, and have often had serious misunderstandings, sometimes ending in the death of an individual, and nearly occasioning civil war. They have also to guard against their natural enemies, the Sioux, who are at no great distance. The Pawnees, also, with whom the Mandanes formerly lived in the same villages, are now their most inveterate enemies. Arms and ammunition are, therefore, necessary articles, and everyone has a stock of ball and powder laid up in case of emergency.

We packed up our purchases, and gave them into the care of the landlord. These people are much given to thieving, but in the hut [577] in which a stranger is lodged, his property may be left in perfect security; none dare touch it, as the master conceives his honor concerned in whatever is placed under his immediate protection. Out of doors, if they can pick your pocket, or pilfer any article,